

Base PX Means Big Business For Many Retail Suppliers

By REYNOLDS KNIGHT

There's not an ex-GI alive who doesn't recall his shopping days at the base PX. The military store was and is the discount house par excellence. Haircuts cost you 20 cents and you could shop all day in civvy stores and never even come close to the PX bargains available on such items as radios, jewelry, watches, cameras and novelties.

These days the discount fare in military outlets has become so broad and basic that the military family can satisfy virtually all its needs without ever stepping off the base. This has happened because hundreds of big companies have developed strong military sales staffs of their own, compete vigorously for space on PX shelves, and pay

handsome fees to agencies that report like military high commands on troop movements, such as the large personnel shift from Europe to the Far East that is occurring at the present time.

What's the attraction of the military market to America's retail suppliers? It's not hard to understand when you consider that the total market here and abroad, totals more than 8 million persons, and that the military rang up retail sales of \$3.4 billion last year, making it the nation's third-largest retail distributor, ranking behind only the A&P and Sears Roebuck.

CORN GROWING, once a high-risk business, has become almost a sure-fire enterprise, thanks to the development of hybrid seed.

Dr. Frank Remley, technical director of the Cargill, Inc. seed department in Minneapolis, illustrates the impact hybrids have had on U.S. corn production since they were first put to use in the early 1930's. Yield-per-acre averages jumped from 20.5 bushels in 1930 to 73 bushels last year, an increase of more than 250 per cent. In 1930 U.S. farmers planted 110 million acres for a harvest of 2 billion bushels while last year they planted only 57 million acres and harvested 4.16 billion bushels.

The Cargill scientist says, "Farmers today can almost guarantee good yields by carefully selecting the proper hybrids and by sticking to good planting, cultivation and harvest practices." He explained that hybrids, besides boosting

yields, have minimized—in some cases completely overcome—losses from weather, moisture, disease and insects.

AN ENGLISH plastic shower cabinet is supplied in kit form and can be erected on a pre-plumbed site in 40 minutes by the do-it-yourselfer. Shower is 30 inches square and 79 inches high. Comes in pink, blue or white and has transparent roof to allow light penetration. . . . A new elastic coating for the roofs and sidewalls of buildings that are subjected to severe vibration, stress and chemical corrosion. The material, called Zyroflex, is a rubber film that is said to move with the surface it covers. Will adhere to concrete, plywood, metal, stucco, and bitumen and can be applied with brush, roller or spray. . . . An electric base-

board heating unit that is mounted in minutes over an existing outlet with a couple of nails or screws. Features rare-earth heating element producing well-balanced radiant and convection heat waves. No moving parts or glowing wires, and a 10-year guarantee.

THE AIR conditioning and refrigeration industry, already riding the crest of a boom, has taken a long-range look into the future and found every reason for glowing optimism.

Seasonal sales already are climbing along with the mercury, and an industry spokesman, William H. Roberts, president of Borg-Wagner's York division, foresees an industry volume of \$3.5 billion this year, up 12 per cent from

the previous record of \$3.1 billion in 1965. York is operating with a pre-season order backlog 50 per cent higher than a year ago, and is rushing completion of a \$12-million expansion program at its main plant in York, Pa. to meet the demand.

Roberts says the reason for the boom is simple to understand: Americans simply have become accustomed to year-around comfort and they expect it in cars, schools and hospitals today just as in their homes, movie houses, restaurants, shops and offices. The trend will send industry sales soaring to \$5.5 billion a year in 1970, up about 80 per cent from present figures, he predicts.

GOVERNMENT botanists are

in the midst of a worldwide search for natural substances that will act as anti-cancer agents. So far they have screened 10,000 plant samples, representing 116 different plant families, in the hope of finding materials that will inhibit tumor growth.

There was a hint of success in the venture this month when botanists from the new crops research branch of the Department of Agriculture announced they had found 400 species of plants that have "significantly inhibited tumor growth" in mice. Scientists are now trying to isolate the active ingredient in the extracts from these plants, but a number of these tumor-inhibiting samples have already been eliminated because they cause toxicity or side effects.

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Fresh

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OR

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